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Smith College / Smithsonian Institution

Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Betty J. Belanus

Department or Office: Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Museum/Unit: 

Phone Number: 202-633-6582 Email Address: belanusb@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage produces the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival, a ten-day outdoor cultural event on the National Mall. This research-based Festival features U.S. states, regions, and foreign countries each year. Preparations for the Festival include field and library research, and follow-ups on past Festivals include the creation of educational materials, exhibitions, and videos. For more information see www.festival.si.edu

The Center also administers Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, and various cultural heritage projects. See www.folklife.si.edu for an overview.

The supervisor is a Festival curator and education specialist with over 20 years experience at the Smithsonian Institution, and is also a Smith College graduate (Smith ’77).

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

A Smith student with interest and some expertise in cooking, food history and food traditions is sought for a project celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival with a new, youth-oriented cookbook featuring the cuisines of different cultures around the U.S. and the world. (It is perceived that the cookbook will be an online product, although a proposal for a hard copy version may be developed.)

A hard cover cookbook was previously published as part of the 25th anniversary commemoration. It is now out of print but still available through used booksellers online (https://www.amazon.com/Smithsonian-Folklife-Cookbook-KIRLIN-KATHERINE/dp/1560980893). Since then, recipes with contextual information have been frequently published as blogs on the Festival web site. (see for instance http://www.festival.si.edu/blog/2016/basque-recipe-talo-bread-sarteneko-skillet/ ).
The intern’s project would be to research ideas for the structure, focus and content of the cookbook, and to begin research on stories and recipes that reflect a variety of cuisines featured at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in the past.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

A final product for this project will depend on how far the research progresses during the time of the internship, and the specific interests of the student. One possibility would be the research and writing of a sample chapter for the proposed cookbook. This would require careful research for historical and contextual information, and development of a group of viable recipes and stories to accompany them. If the intern needs and/or is inclined toward a more academic research product, a paper could be developed focusing on the ways food has been demonstrated, “performed” and presented at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival over the years.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Olivia Cadaval and Sojin Kim

Department or Office: CFCH            Museum/Unit:

Phone Number: 202 633 6473            Email Address: cadavalo@si.edu; kimSO@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) promotes the understanding and continuity of contemporary grassroots cultures in the United States and abroad. It produces the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, exhibitions, documentary films and videos, symposia, and educational materials. The Center conducts research, maintains the Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, and provides educational and research opportunities. The Center has a staff of folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and cultural anthropologists, who carry out research, public programming and educational outreach.

The Festival is a major 10-day public program staged on the National Mall that brings traditional artists together for concerts, demonstration, narrative sessions, workshops, and informal interactions with each other and the public. The event is documented through photo, audio, and video, providing a rich source of primary materials for research, education, and online resources for reaching broader audiences. Last year, the Festival featured a program titled On the Move: Migration and Immigration Today. The program invited visitors to consider how immigration and migration both challenges and energizes culture. Through discussion and performance, it explored how the movement of individuals, families, and even entire communities impacts our identities, culture, and everyday lives. We are building on the success of this program to plan an expanded production for the 2017 Festival — this time, foregrounding the perspectives of youth — as artists, cultural producers, and participants in rapidly changing communities. I am curating this program, together with Amalia Cordova and Sojin Kim. We are also collaborating with other Smithsonian colleagues as well as external partners including the National Museum of American History and the American Anthropological Association.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

Festival programs generate significant and valuable contributions of primary resources (recordings, videos, and photographs of performances, discussion sessions, and participant interviews) to the Center’s archives and collections. The body of material generated from the 2016 and 2017 On the Move programs will serve as resources for future researchers from outside the Smithsonian as well as for the Center’s immigration/migration research cluster (a group of curators, Fellows, and visiting scholars).
The Smith intern will work closely with these primary resources and generate transcriptions and analysis of recorded interviews, discussion sessions, and performances. These materials will contribute to the development of a research plan that frames key themes and directions for future inquiry, as well as a research statement that proposes specific outputs (public programs, publications, media projects) and grant proposals that might fund them. The intern will also participate in monthly brainstorming meetings with the research group, meet with individual members, and conduct additional secondary source material research, which will contribute to an ongoing bibliography project. An intern with past coursework in American Studies would be particularly well prepared for this work—but this major is not a requirement.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

   Project 1. A web-based presentation of research that builds upon the research plan and its framing questions. This presentation could be a media piece or a micro-site organized around a particular theme—and interpreted through text and media excerpted and edited from Festival recordings, photographs.

   Project 2. An annotated research finding aid for recordings, videos, and photographs from the two Festival programs organized by theme. Each theme would include a conceptually-developed introduction and selected bibliography. This project could potentially be published from the Center’s website—pending archives and curatorial approval.

The following are some examples of projects interns have done based on recordings, videos, and photographs of performances, discussion sessions, and participant interviews from the Festival:

http://www.festival.si.edu/blog/2016/body-language-a-discussion-on-gender-and-performance/

http://www.festival.si.edu/blog/2016/filosofia-caribena-transmitting-afro-cuban-sacred-traditions-through-song/

http://www.festival.si.edu/blog/2016/mixteko-a-multilingual-voice-in-california-rap/
1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

I am in the process of developing several projects. These include a small exhibition on a conceptual portrait of nineteenth-century sculptor Harriet Hosmer by contemporary artist Patricia Cronin as well as a larger exhibition of new work based on Dorothea Lange’s archive by artist Hung Liu.

I am also continuing to identify future artists for the National Portrait Gallery’s performance art program.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

Preferred candidates will have a strong foundation in art history and good writing skills. The scope of the work will involve research and drafting exhibition texts for the following two exhibitions that I am developing:

**Harriet Hosmer, Lost and Found**

Patricia Cronin (b. 1963) is known for conceptual portraits that explore contemporary themes, including gender identity and sexuality, through traditional materials and forms. Her Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908) *Lost and Found* series, created in 2007, is an act of recovery. Cronin conducted extensive archival research drawing on Hosmer’s letters and journals, some of which are housed in the Archives of American Art, to uncover the sculptor’s voice and learn in Hosmer’s own words about the creation of her sculptures and important friendships in Rome in the 1860s. When she came across a sculpture that Hosmer wrote about but is now unlocated or lost, Cronin created an evocative ghostly image of the work. In an essay on this series, Alex Nemerov wrote, “No doubt Hosmer is undeservedly little known. No doubt Cronin is wise to conjure the ghostly blur of the artist’s work and the project that would recover it.”

This exhibition will bring together a carefully selected group of watercolors from Cronin’s *Lost and Found*, focusing on the sculptures of female subjects that Hosmer wrote about in terms of her autobiography. Cronin’s watercolors conjure ghostliness, and she calls her work “Psychical Research,” drawing our attention to the relative absence of Hosmer’s story in the narrative of art history. The selection of works will tell Hosmer’s story along with a daguerreotype of a Hosmer sculpture, and daguerreotypes of her circle of women expatriate friends, including Charlotte Cushman, Matilda Hays, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who inspired her work and supported her intellectually while living in Rome. Each of these women wrote about their impressions of Hosmer, including Browning who described Hosmer as “the young American sculptress who is a great pet of mine and Robert’s, and who emancipates the eccentric life of a perfectly ‘emancipated female’ from all shadow of blame, by the purity of hers.”

Prominent male writers also wrote of this circle of women’s powerful connections, including Van Wyck Brooks who said, Miss Cushman was a friend of all the women sculptors, and on their behalf she made war on all the sculptors of the other sex.”

The exhibition will serve as a multimedia conceptual portrait of Hosmer, and will offer a view of the complexity of Hosmer’s story as a pioneering female sculptor who voiced her story through her careful choices of female subjects rendered in the interminable material of marble. In the process she defied conventional

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expectations of women in her time. Further, the exhibition will reveal the support networks of expatriate women in Rome and the various portrait technologies that were at play in 1860s, including technological advances in carving marble and the emerging medium of photography to offer the visitor an opportunity to contemplate the translation of an image from one medium to another.

Hung Liu: After Lange

As the first large-scale solo exhibition of the work of Chinese-born American artist Hung Liu (b. 1948) at the National Portrait Gallery, “Hung Liu: After Lange” will feature a new body of work that has never been shown before in an art museum. The work – large-scale oil paintings, smaller canvases, and intimate watercolors – is derived from Liu’s encounter with photographs in the Dorothea Lange Archive at the Oakland Museum of California. Her deep identification with Lange as a woman artist, and with Lange’s subjects as migrant workers, inspired her to reimagine and essentially “rescue” Lange’s subjects by translating them from 1930s black and white photographs into richly colored paintings that bring Lange’s dustbowl subjects to life in a contemporary context. Additionally, Liu created animated, small watercolors that reinvigorate Lange’s photographs, many of which are unpublished and little known. She considers all of this work an extension of her biography. Liu hopes to premiere these works at the NPG.

Hung Liu was born in China near the end of the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists. Under siege by Communist forces, when she was six months old, her family fled their town of Changchun to seek safety. Later, when Hung was six years old, her mother described the story of their journey. Her mother’s account of a refugee baby left on the riverbank seared Hung’s mind and she says she still carries the ghost of the baby with her to this day. When she was twenty years old in 1968 she was sent to the countryside for proletarian reeducation. During the next four years she worked in the fields for 360 days a year. Thus, the faces of Lange’s subjects speak to her, conjuring memories of her experiences in the fields and her own journey as a migrant. By turning Lange’s depression-era photographs into 21st century paintings, Liu not only draws out personal meaning and autobiographical content from but also extends agency to the subjects.

Hung Liu’s story as a woman raised in Communist China has played a crucial part in her work throughout her career. After attending graduate school at the Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing as one of the few women students, she left for America while her son stayed behind with his grandmothers in Beijing. As a woman who left her family “in search for herself,” she identified with American films such as The Grapes of Wrath and Sophie’s Choice. In her experience of watching these films she was reminded of her own story of being sent to the countryside to work in the fields as a young woman. Particularly in viewing the leading role played by Meryl Streep in Sophie’s Choice, she writes, “I did identify with Sophie’s choice, her internment, her migration to a new land, and, in the end, her ghosts. As a child of the Communist Revolution, and as an immigrant to this country, I have ghosts of my own, and I summon them day after day in my paintings.”

For Hung Liu moving from documentary photographs to interpretive paintings intended for museum display is part of what she sees as an identification with the subject and a collaboration between herself and Lange. The transfer of image from a black-and-white photograph to a large-scale oil painting with rich colors and with cropping that forms new compositions merges Dorothea Lange, Hung Liu, and the subject together in meaningful ways:

While painting is a rather slow process, the scale, the composition, as well as the color are all a departure from an original photo. Using the “original,” I started thinking that Dorothea Lange had the first-hand experience of shooting the photos. She talked to them [the subjects], listened to their stories and wrote down their words. During the painting process, looking hard into the photos and examining every detail carefully, I felt that I could transfer some of Lange’s first-hand experience to me. Therefore, sometimes I feel as if I was traveling with her as an observer and even a collaborator, together trying to understand the Migrant Mother.
Creating the lines around the figures as she sketches them onto the canvas visualizes a “kind of topography” of Dorothea Lange’s photographs linking them to the land and metaphorically mapping her own story. She explains, “I’m traveling through the landscape with Lange and opening up a much bigger landscape of the Great Depression.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

Research projects might include developing a small exhibition that would serve as a critique of the story told through the commissioned portraiture at the National Portrait Gallery; developing a One Life exhibition proposal on the visual biography of someone who has made a significant impact on American history or culture; or writing an academic paper further exploring an aspect of portraiture that is represented in contemporary works in the NPG’s collections.
Smith College/Smithsonian Institution Internship Project Proposal for 2017

Division of Home and Community Life

Within NMAH, the Division of Home and Community Life focuses on the architecture, foodways, and lifeways of Americans. This newly created division incorporates collections such as Ceramics and Glass, Costume, Textiles, Domestic Life (home furniture and furnishings; toys, games, and dolls; kitchenware; architecture, etc.). In addition, this Division holds collections on various American racial and ethnic groups, immigration, religion, folk music, and other materials. Within this division, I have a particular specialty in African American History and Culture as well as in immigration and ethnic history.

During this upcoming year (2017), principally I will be conducting the artifactual, photographic, archival, and ethnomusicalogical research for an upcoming book manuscript on children and childhood, featuring objects related to childhood from the NMAH collections. I will also be working with donors to add new objects to the Smithsonian collections. I will also be conducting research and doing interviews for an emerging book project that analyzes how the Smithsonian Institution became a much more diverse and inclusive institution in the last fifty years of its history. I will be continuing work on a long term "Race and Ethnicity Project" that is becoming an on-line project. Finally, I am working on a proposal for a small exhibition on NMAH's collection of South Carolina coiled grass (or "sweetgrass") baskets that will involve collections surveys.

Serving as a “Junior Curator”

Serving as a “junior curator” under my direction on one or more of these projects would allow the intern to participate in the extensive graphics, artifactual, audio-visual and bibliographic research process necessary for the interpretive development of the audiovisual and educational aspects of a museum book and public project (which will include on-line components and possibly musical components); to participate in the intellectual process for acquiring and selecting objects, and other project related tasks. The student will learn a great deal about how the museum selects and prepares collections; about the research and interpretive elements of curatorial work; and about the preparation and development of public programming.

Learning Objectives

This is an excellent opportunity for an undergraduate student in American Studies, American History, Anthropology or Ethnic Studies (or related fields) to utilize her prior training and apply this knowledge to the particular situation of producing book projects on a very general topic. In order to do this, the student will need to analyze historical and contemporary texts, prepare interpretive strategies based on those texts and their independent object research, and formulate component ideas and design strategies for the visual elements of the book and for a variety of different kinds of educational and public programming.

In addition, I make a concerted effort to visit local exhibitions and installations with my students in order to aid in the development of critical interpretive skills in analyzing and assessing “informal” educational zones such as museum exhibitions. Depending upon their interests, for the final project, I work with the student to produce any of a variety of different kinds of research products from annotated bibliographies, highly detailed research reports, or collections surveys for example, based her work within NMAH or related collections, and/or traditional essay or paper for her final project.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Margaret Salazar-Porzio and Magdalena Mieri

Department or Office: Program in Latino History, Curatorial Affairs

Museum/Unit: NMAH

Phone Number: 202-633-3704 Email Address: mierima@si.edu and Salazar-porziom@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Museum’s mission: Through incomparable collections, rigorous research, and dynamic public outreach, we explore the infinite richness and complexity of American history. We help people understand the past in order to make sense of the present and shape a more humane future.

The Program in Latino history works across the museum to create educational opportunities for all Americans to learn more about the diversity and complexity of Latina/o history and culture. The program makes collections available online, presents public programs, and works with community members and organizations to develop projects.

The Division of Home and Community Life uses scholarship and collections to educate and inspire a broad audience about domestic and social environments and the intersections between public and private life in our nation’s past. The division cares for its collections and develops them to represent the country’s many peoples in the areas of home life, racial and gender identity, family structure, work, consumer culture, health, housing, modernization and the role of technology, invention, leisure, community institutions, religion and religious affiliation, and education.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

The program in Latino history and the division of Home and Community Life are collaborating to create educational, content rich, material about the Mexican Repatriation movement of the 1930s. President Donald Trump has proposed immigration reform that would include building a wall on the Mexican border, paid for by Mexico, and calls for the mass deportation of undocumented immigrants in the US. His deportation plan echoes a largely forgotten chapter of American history when, in the 1930s, during the Depression and beyond, about a million people were forced out of the US across the border into Mexico. It wasn’t called deportation back then. It was referred to as repatriation, or returning people to their native country. But about 60 percent of the people in the Mexican repatriation drive were actually American citizens of Mexican descent. This chapter in US history is relevant now more than ever as the next generation of students and young adults must seek to understand and confront these historical policies in our present political climate.

Thus the Museum has entered a partnership with the Kettering Foundation to create an historic issues guide based on the question of labor vis-à-vis immigration. With a focus on the Repatriation movement of the early to mid-20th century we ask: How have labor and immigration informed each other? And what impact has the US economy, dominant ideologies about race and nation, as well as perceptions about societal needs had on US policy for labor and immigration? The history of Mexican Repatriation in the early to mid-20th century provides a rich case study.

The intern selected for this project will conduct research to identify primary sources, create an annotated bibliography, and compile a list of resources to be used in the Issues Guide. In addition, the intern will help organize
discussion forums and work with community groups inside and outside of the museum to gather concerns to inform the writing of this important guide.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

Research products will be a bibliography and a digital object group to be featured in the Museum’s website accompanied by a short interpretive essay. Depending on the intern’s interests, expertise and talents, research products could include:

- Compile a bibliography and filmography on the topic of labor and immigration, paying attention to the following themes: Mexican Repatriation, the Bracero Program, segregation/integration, civil rights, shifting labor and immigration policies, and the broader significance of labor in US immigrant communities over the 20th century, etc.
- Write a literature review on a specific theme or annotate the bibliography.
- Use literature review/bibliography to:
  - Develop outlines for this historic issues guide that would be geared toward middle and high school students who would engage with the material and objects.
  - Create a list of objects that could help the Smithsonian tell these stories both in museum exhibitions and through the historic issues guide.
- Plumb the Smithsonian, Library of Congress, and National Archives collections and databases for artifacts related to Mexican Repatriation.
- Propose and write a blog about the themes above in relation to the project or the objects at the National Museum of American History.
Name of Supervisor: Debbie Schaefer-Jacobs  
Department: Home & Community Life Museum/Unit: Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History

Phone Number: 202-633-3782  
Email Address: schaeferjacobsd@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

   Debbie Schaefer-Jacobs is the curator in the Division of Home and Community Life of both the Education Collection and the “Harry T. Peters America on Stone Collection” of 19th Century prints http://amhistory.si.edu/petersprints/searchresults.cfm?Category=Political+Caricatures. She actively collects and catalogs in the history of education as well as provides accessibility of both collections on the internet, collaborating with researchers, through publications, conference presentations and exhibitions. For the past couple of years Debbie has been a member of the exhibit team of Many Voices, One Nation and provided objects and information for several new exhibits such as Little Rock Nine materials for American Stories, education objects for the Democracy exhibit and school desk patent models for the 1st floor West exhibit cases.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

   The project entails object research and producing contextual web labels for two groups of museum artifacts under the guidance of a curator in the division of Home and Community Life.

   The first is a collection of 31 objects related to school segregation from the first half of the 20th Century and school busing in the 1960’s through 1980’s. These objects include an annual report from the Calhoun Colored School in rural Alabama, two tuition cards from rural Mississippi, several artifacts relating to Central High School and several Dunbar Junior/Senior High in Little Rock., and selected material relating to busing students in Boston. Additional cataloguing will be conducted and web labels prepared before they are edited and published in the Smithsonian’s Collections site. A brief essay introducing the group of objects would also be drafted by the student for the object group on museum’s web site. Some of the Little Rock artifacts were previously exhibited in the American Stories exhibit and feature in a student blog: http://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/member-little-rock-nine-shares-her-memories.

   The second part of the project consists completing research on 114 Jacksonian and Antebellum era lithographs and chromolithographs from the Harry T. Peters America on Stone Collection. These prints are visual documents from the 1830’s and 1840’s. The student will be preparing web labels to be published on the museum’s web site http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/object-groups as well as for the Smithsonian’s Collections Search http://www.si.edu/Collections. During this process, the student would conduct research on events and topics depicted in the prints and additional biographical research on the artists and lithographers, augmenting descriptive fields as needed and documenting bibliographic sources. These prints from have already been catalogued and photographed, however the student would have the opportunity to conduct additional contextual research to add to the interpretation while drafting the web labels. Some prints have previously been exhibited and illustrated in publications but the digital records would be enhanced.

   The student must have strong writing skills and to be well-grounded in 19th and 20th American History, specifically the Jim Crow era and landmark Civil Rights legislation as it pertains to education (such as Brown v. Board.) for the school segregation artifacts, and a familiarity with the politics of the Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren administrations. Some additional references pertaining to the artifacts will be provided as well as training in the basic use of the museum’s collections management system, MultiMimsy XG.
3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

The student would gain experience writing online exhibit labels while using iconic artifacts in the National Collections. The final product would also include both a blog on some aspect of either collection and the eventual publication of the 145 web labels on the Smithsonian’s Collections search database. In addition the student will have assisted with the development of an object group about school segregation for NMAH web site. This project would provide internet accessibility to two major groups of objects of interest to academics, K-12 educators, undergraduates in need of illustrations, and the general public.
Smith College - Smithsonian Institution Internship Project

Research Project Proposal, 2017

Name of Advisor: Joanna C. Scherer, Emeritus Anthropologist

Department or Office: Department of Anthropology

Bureau: National Museum of Natural History

Telephone & E-mail: (202) 633-1962; schererj@si.edu

1. Please provide background information on the work of your office and own research:


   For advisor’s independent research see the following Smithsonian web sites:

   http://www.nmnh.si.edu/anthro/wrensted

   http://www.nmnh.si.edu/anthro/redcloud/

   And publications:


2. Describe the proposed research projects including duties, nature and scope of the work, and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation to undertake this project:

   Research on the subjects of North American Indian ethnology and photography and the history of anthropology.

   Current projects:

   1-Ongoing projects include the transcription of Alice C. Fletcher’s original field notebook from her work among the Sioux and Omaha in 1881-1882. I am also preparing a second publication on A.C. Fletcher. This work-in-progress includes Fletcher’s firsthand observations of the Sioux Sun Dance and publication of her “Going Home with the Indians” an account of her escorting Sioux students from Carlisle Indian Industrial School back to their reservations for their summer vacation.

   2-An in-depth study of iconic images to bring back their identities such as “Migrant Mother” the famous photo by Dorothea Lange, 1936.

   3-Production of web sites of several of advisor’s most well-known articles on North American Indian photography.

No courses required. Must have strong interest in Anthropology and/or American History and Native Americans. Attention to details is required and the ability to work independently.

3. Describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smiths College Program:

Research products could include a paper on many aspects of Alice Fletcher’s life and career especially comparing her unpublished manuscript with various published articles on subjects such as Omaha/Sioux women’s societies, subsistence activities, Indian myths, the reservation system, and mission school life. Other products could include creation of a web site on a number of historical photo research projects relating to advisor’s work, and a paper on unlimited number of photographers and artists who specialized in American Indian images. I will train the intern in my research methods and office procedures and will oversee the work product. The intern is expected to keep a journal during the course of the internship that will record the research, readings and work completed.

Research will primarily be conducted at the Smithsonian’s Department of Anthropology Library, supervisor’s office in the National Museum of Natural History and National Anthropological Archives. Some research may be conducted at the Library of Congress and the National Archives and Records Administration. The goal of this internship is to provide the student with a working appreciation of research necessary to bring academic materials, mainly on North American Indians, to the public, either through exhibit or publication.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Madelyn Shaw

Department or Office: Textiles / Home & Community Life  
Museum/Unit: NMAH

Phone Number: 202-633-3589  
Email Address: shawm@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Textiles Department holds approximately 50,000 objects related to the production and consumption of textiles in America. We are working to make this collection available to researchers and the public through online access. A wide range of collection segments need research and cataloging, ranging from pre-industrial textile-making tools through patent models of looms and sewing machines, from 18th century household hand-made textiles to examples of avant-garde American apparel textiles from the 20th century. The curator, volunteers, interns, and fellows regularly blog about the collection and create object groups for posting to the web. There is enormous scope in the collection to work with an intern to tailor a project to a student’s research interests, OR to challenge an intern to attack something completely new and unexpected. A recent intern project, cataloging textile samples collected by US Consular officers between 1898 and 1920, documented the global trade in textiles during that period, and led that student to discover connections between South Carolina cotton mills and the ivory trade in Africa that have led her to a thesis topic for her MA degree.

My personal research at this time is focused on the American silk industry and the global trade in wool as it related to a century of mass cold-climate warfare between the Crimean and Korean wars. We have departmental projects in progress on our quilt, sampler, household needlework, sewing machine patent model, woven coverlet, silk industry, and lace collections.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

Between 1912 and about 1934, the Smithsonian National Museum’s curator of textiles, Frederick L. Lewton, corresponded with American textile manufacturers, requesting samples of the output of firms whose work he considered important either for artistic merit or technological advances. As a result we have the largest and most comprehensive collection of the output of the American textile industry from its peak production years. However, the data that Lewton collected from the manufacturers has never been associated with the objects. This internship would focus on cataloging several important acquisitions from major American textile firms during those decades: such as Cheney Brothers (silk, Connecticut); the Shelton Looms (simulated furs – silk, artificial silk, mohair, Connecticut); Arlington Woollen Mills (woolens, Massachusetts); Smith & Kaufmann (silk ribbon; New Jersey). The intern would use original accession documentation in conjunction with object study to ensure proper cataloging of the textile samples. Training would include guided research in trade journals and periodicals contemporary with the objects; cataloging methodology and terminology for textile objects; data entry standards for museum collections database; proper object handling and storage methods; and basic condition reporting. The work would include research time (in-house, online, & Library of Congress); object study (collecting descriptive and condition data); data entry time; and writing time for production of project-related blogs and object groups.

While some knowledge of or familiarity with textiles and fashion would be very helpful to an intern taking on this project, an understanding of the social history and/or economic history of the late 19th and early 20th centuries is equally important. This project will expose students to issues beyond the production and consumption of consumer goods: worldwide trade in raw materials; tariff schedules, industrial espionage, design piracy, labor relations and worker welfare, innovation in engineering and management, and the development of an “American Style” by a coalition of manufacturers, designers, and critics – native-born and immigrant. They will need a basic framework of American history of that period to make sense of these topics.
3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

Research products might include:

- posts for the NMAH “Oh Say Can You See” Blog. These generally are 500-750 word essays on a particular object or small group of objects, highlighting their historical importance. They include images and citations;

- object groups for the NMAH online collections page (http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections). An object group generally includes an introductory page or two providing context for the overall grouping, and additional text for each sub-section of objects within the larger group;

- individual object records for the SI online collections search (http://collections.si.edu/search/). While these do not constitute essay length research, they would be invaluable additions to the scholarly record and to making these collections accessible to the public.

The author’s name is attached to both blog posts and object group text, so these can be cited on a student’s CV. All text is edited by the curator and either the blog manager or the EDAN manager.
Name of Supervisor(s): Carlene Stephens
Department or Office: Div. of Work & Industry
Museum/Unit: NMAH
Phone Number: 202-633-3919
Email Address: stephensc@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Division of Work and Industry collects artifacts, documents, photographs, and oral histories relating to work and industry in America. The division’s collections, exhibitions, public programs, research, and writing put America’s agricultural, economic, engineering, industrial, and transportation heritage into historical context, exploring its role in society and culture and its impact on the lives of diverse people. The division’s main areas of coverage are agriculture, natural resources, timekeeping, retail, mining, engineering, industry, electricity, telephone, telegraph and transportation.

C. Stephens has care of collections in timekeeping, automatons and robots, locks and keys, and acoustic sound recording technology.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

C. Stephens is seeking an intern to help with research for a temporary exhibition tentatively called Elephants and Us: Curiosity, Commodity, and Conservation. The research includes a division-by-division survey to determine NMAH’s holdings in ivory objects, research on the history and craftsmanship of selected objects, research in primary documents in the NMAH Archives Center on the mass-production of ivory objects in Connecticut, object photography (record shots) and measurement (overall dimensions), and the establishment of an exhibition database for keeping track of that research. The intern will assist with some or all of this research, depending upon skills and interest. The ideal intern would have terrific computer database skills, a deep interest in the history of human-animal relations, and an interest in the material culture of ivory objects.

The exhibition, in the second round of a proposal process, will open late in 2018 or early 2019 if approved. It is an interdisciplinary study that will explore the changing ways Americans have interacted with elephants from the 18th century to today. In the United States, our relationship with elephants has evolved over centuries from one of exploitation to stewardship. We have made them our entertaining captives (circus animals, for example) and cultural icons (Republican Party symbol and Dumbo, for just two instances). Americans were once avid consumers and manufacturers of objects containing elephant ivory. Our mandate to make a difference for the species today is a significant change of direction, considering the once sizable and legal U.S. ivory market and our country’s culpability in the population reduction. Americans now have taken a global lead in enforcing commercial ivory bans, thwarting poachers, and conserving elephants.

Our connection to elephants has a riveting history, set against the complex backdrop of international trade in ivory and international treaties. And the story has undeniable contemporary urgency, very much a concern at the Smithsonian’s Zoo and Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI).

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:
Depending on skills and interests, an intern might produce a research paper (a survey that puts a number of objects in context, an in-depth investigation of the craft and use of one or more related ivory objects), a proposal for a public program relating to the exhibition’s themes, or annotated sections of exhibition script. Other ideas for projects to satisfy the requirement are welcome.

Ivory sampler from NMAH

Scissors spectacles, a gift from Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington

![Billiard Balls made of ivory, about 1925](image)

Billiard Balls made of ivory, about 1925

Ivory fan, early 19th century

![Ivory fan, early 19th century](image)
Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): John Troutman

Department or Office: Culture and the Arts
Museum/Unit: NMAH

Phone Number: 202-633-7514
Email Address: TroutmanJ@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

I am Curator of American Music at the NMAH. In this role I build our instrument and related artifact collections that document the history of music in American life. I also develop our museum exhibitions on music and popular culture, and I work with other staff to develop on-site music programming. Currently my division is developing a new permanent exhibition, Entertaining America; this major installation, scheduled to open in 2019, examines how cinema, music, sports, theatre, and broadcasting has changed American life. My books include Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934, and most recently, Kīkā Kila: How the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Changed the Sound of Modern Music. My new research projects include a biography of Hawaiian musician Charles E. King and a book project on the history of vaudeville.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

We currently maintain over 6,000 musical instruments in our collections. While our collections feature numerous strengths, we have identified a number of collecting needs. For example, we would like to expand our collections as they relate to Latinx musicians and Asian American musicians, and we would like to build out our collections in the realms of pop, rock and roll, country, and hip hop, to name a few. First, however, we need to identify objects currently maintained in our collections that represent these fields. Our Smith College intern would select, depending upon the scope, one, two or three of these areas of interest (or the intern might propose other fields of interest not listed above), and would survey our collections in order to create an inventory of relevant instruments, other artifacts, and manuscript collections. These inventories would provide us with critical information that will further illuminate particular collecting needs. At the same time, the intern would research these fields in order to develop a report that will suggest how the museum should prioritize its outreach to artists and other individuals in order to attend to these collections needs. While no coursework or particular academic background is required in order to fulfill this position, we encourage applications from students who have pursued
studies of music or cultural history at Smith, and we might develop a small selection of readings to orient
the student before the internship commences.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the
work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

The intern and I will work together during the first week to identify, depending on the scope, one, two or
three areas of music history that the intern will explore in our collections. The intern will pursue
research of these musical areas at the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress, and will develop
annotated inventories of our collections in those musical areas. In addition, the intern will provide a
report that assesses the strengths and weaknesses of our collections as they relate to these musical
areas, and will draft a collections plan that will prioritize particular collections needs as well as suggest
musicians and other individuals whom we might contact in order to expand our collections in an
appropriate and meaningful manner.
1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

My research within the Division of Home and Community Life focuses on Latin@ history and culture and how Latinos create and maintain a sense of community, home, and family. I have an interest in food studies and the intersection of food, culture, community and politics. I am also involved in food history programming and am interested in how we can tell stories of how migrants and the food landscape change in the U.S. Currently I am working on immigration broadly, the Dominican presence in the US, Mexican vineyard workers, and the Cuban unaccompanied minor program known as Operation Peter Pan.

The Division of Home and Community Life Collections span an exceptionally broad range of American history subjects. Holdings include houses; household furnishings; appliances; food serving and preparation items; lighting; childhood artifacts; objects and documentation related to the manufacturing and merchandizing of household items; laces and needlework tools; men's, women's, and children's clothing and accessories; patent models; photographs, prints, and trade literature associated with collections; quilts and samplers; and sewing machines and textile manufacturing equipment.

The research the Division undertakes is concerned with domestic and social environments and the intersection and tensions between public and private life. We explore changing notions of home, family, and community and how individuals and groups have reinforced or challenged accepted ideas of family, gender roles, community, age, religion, the division of labor, and social and political issues.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:
What does the immigration experience mean for creation of home and community life? How do food traditions change and adapt? How has immigration shaped our food landscape? What objects in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution help tell the story of the immigration experience? This research will fall in line with the planning of the *Food: Transforming the American Table, 1950-2000* exhibit refresh/remodel (bringing the date up to 2017). The American Food and Wine History Project is one of the research and public program anchors for the museum. We hope to lay out a series of object case studies and web based blogs related to migration history and food related content for other museum programs and projects in the future.

The project will consist of three main objectives:

1) Searching for primary sources such as oral histories and image collections dealing with immigration and food (broadly defined) and writing short summaries of the findings. This may require trips to the Library of Congress and National Archives.

2) Search large newspapers like NY Times, LA Times, as well as secondary sources about immigration and how “ethnic” foods are discussed. This may require trips to the Library of Congress and National Archives.

3) The intern will help to identify Museum collections in the Division of Home and Community Life and in other divisions within the museum to see what relevant objects and stories can be presented in relation to immigration and food. The intern will contextualize the objects and stories with primary and secondary research by writing short case studies on the objects keeping in mind a use for exhibit/web labels as well as and “objects out of storage“ program.

3. **Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:**

Topics like immigration and food studies are full of research opportunities from historical, anthropological, ethnic studies, American studies, popular culture, and museum studies perspective. An interest and knowledge in food studies and immigration history is desirable but not necessary.

Using the knowledge gained from working in the Division, working with “hands on” collections, and incorporating primary and secondary knowledge, the intern will:

1. Write short case studies on objects which will help guide exhibit case development and objects out of storage program. This can take the form of a detailed annotated and footnoted exhibit treatment.

2. Will write a short report on the primary and secondary research findings, much like an annotated bibliography. This will serve as a guide post and map for future research on the topic and project
Should the intern require a tradition research paper, then the intern can take a topic of her own choosing based on food studies, immigration history, or the material culture of community and immigration history. I will mentor the intern in producing such a paper.

These projects will be consistent with the student’s academic pursuits and should help define her/his professional objectives.
Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Halle Butvin, Director of Special Projects

Department or Office: N/A
Museum/Unit: CFCH

Phone Number: 202-633-4015
Email Address: butvinHM@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) works to increase the visibility and vitality of culture bearers, artists, and traditions to promote cultural expression as essential to human well-being and community health. In an effort to champion cultural vitality and sustainability, CFCH works with individuals and communities to preserve and elevate cultural practices, including those that improve and sustain local economies.

The Smithsonian Artisan Initiative (SAI), a CFCH program dedicated to building the sustainability of these traditions, brings together community-driven research and documentation, product development and enterprise training, design development, and a suite of tools artisans can use to unlock access to both local and international markets. SAI aims to re-position artisans as leaders of the creative economy, and provides the knowledge, skills, and support necessary for artisans and their communities to revive and sustain their craft traditions. CFCH is currently implementing two SAI projects – working with ethnic Tibetan communities in China and rural communities in Armenia. The team is also developing projects to expand work with other ethnic minorities in China, and new projects with partners in Bhutan and Kenya.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

SAI’s current work focuses on international projects. However, CFCH has a long history of engaging with artisans in the United States through domestic programs at the annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Therefore, SAI is seeking an intern to conduct research on craft sustainability models in the United States, contribute to the development of SAI’s training materials and evaluation framework, and help shape future SAI programming in the United States.
Research will include review of archival material from past Smithsonian Folklife Festival programs, desk research, and interviews with CFCH staff and other relevant contacts, including a range of American artisans. The intern will also review existing training materials – both SAI-developed and those developed by outside parties – related to artisan craft enterprise development, cultural leadership, and cultural sustainability. Working with the SAI team, the intern will provide input to improve existing training materials and may also create new training materials. Finally, the intern will work with the SAI team to draft a program to support the sustainability of American craft traditions.

Preferred qualifications include:

- coursework in some combination of anthropology, folklore, ethnography, cultural studies, and/or art history;
- experience conducting research, including both desk research and interviews; and
- demonstrated personal interest and skills in design (i.e. craft, fashion design, graphic design, illustration, photography, videography, etc.).

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

Research product possibilities include:

- in-depth features on the newly refreshed Folklife.si.edu website,
- literature review and case studies on craft sustainability in the United States, and
- concept note for program to support the sustainability of American craft traditions.
Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Martin Collins

Department or Office: Space History  Museum/Unit: NASM

Phone Number: 202.633.2413  Email Address: collinsm@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Department of Space History Department is the focal point for the space-related historical research, collecting, and exhibit work of the Museum. Curators and staff within the department research and publish; engage in public outreach through exhibitions, lectures, and other means; and collect and manage the care of rocket and space artifacts in the Museum's collection. The department embodies the Museum's mission to preserve, understand, and communicate the history of rocketry and space exploration as part of the larger story of United States and world history.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

The intern will conduct research in support of a new museum exhibition called “Planet Earth.” This exhibition focuses on the ways in which in the decades after World War II aviation and space technologies helped create a more interconnected, interdependent world, impacting human experience in everyday life—from use of communications, to travel, to our perceptions of Planet Earth as humanity’s home. As a member of the exhibition development team, the intern will conduct research relating to historical and scientific topics in the exhibition, to artifacts, and to relevant images and other visuals. He/she also will contribute to maintaining relevant databases used in tracking and managing the development of the exhibition. Students having a keen interest in 20th century history, environmentalism, globalization, or space technology may find this team project especially interesting.

On arrival, he/she will identify in consultation with the exhibition curator the specifics of their work tasks, depending on background. Learning objectives include:

- Gain skills in research techniques in support of a major museum exhibition.
• Learn how different skill sets (research, collections, and design) combine to create an exhibition.
• Learn the use of Museum databases in the project management of an exhibition

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

Within the above context, the curator and the intern will also identify a specific research project that draws on Museum resources. Possibilities include using Museum, written, visual, or artifact resources to research and further develop two stories directly relevant to the exhibition.

• One section of the exhibition explores the ways in which aviation and spaceflight became important avenues of global change in the years 1945-1965, setting the stage for latter transformations. World War II and the Cold War, through technology, politics, and culture, deepened the emphasis on the global aspects of human experience, but brought into heightened tension military and humanitarian views of its meanings. The student might, for example, look at how these broad reconfigurations can be understood through particular objects or visuals resources.

• Another section focuses on more recent history, in which our daily lives have become increasingly shaped by global technologies that link people and places, near and far, in unprecedented ways. In communications, mobile phones, the internet, and satellite TV make connecting across the world ever easier, through a simple phone call or software such as Facebook. We now have tools such as Google Maps that lets us navigate wherever we might be on the planet. Together such developments have helped redefine who we are and how we relate to others. This is a story of both technology and culture. As a research project, the student might look at how this broad scope of change might be understood through particular objects or visuals resources.

The student might also pursue, given their own interests and course training, a project that speaks to other aspects of the Space Age. In any case, the aim will be to develop a well-defined project suited to Smith requirements.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.

Department or Office: Office of Curatorial Affairs Museum/Unit: NMAH/Archives Center

Phone Number: (202) 633-3729 Email Address: robinsonf@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office: My current research focuses on a work in progress entitled: *The Home Place: A Southern Maryland Family and Their Farm, 1843-1975.* The book at its core centers on the Robinson family and the tobacco farm they owned for 132 years in Prince George’s County, Maryland exploring family, farming, and labor during the stated time period. I am employed as an Archives Specialist in the Archives Center, National Museum of American History. The Archives Center supports the mission of the National Museum of American History by preserving and providing access to documentary evidence of American’s past. The Archives Center’s collection complement the museum’s artifacts and are used for scholarly research, exhibitions, journalism, documentary productions, school programs, and other research and education activities. Over 1,390 Archives Center collections occupy more than 18,000 feet of shelving. In addition to paper-based textual records, many collections contain photographs, motion picture films, videotapes, and sound recordings. The broad topics of technology, advertising, and music offer one way to categorize the Archives Center’s varied holdings. The collections are also rich in material that cuts across these subjects.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

The project will involve reading, extracting relevant information, documenting findings, and writing research reports. The intern will primarily research in one specific collection: The Robinson and Via Family Papers, 1845-2010 (bulk 1872-2000) (AC/NMAH AC0475) specially working with the recently processed addendum to the papers covering the 20th century.

The intern will focus their research on the 20th century specifically with regard to women’s life on the farm (work, daily chores, family care, social, and food ways) and hired labor. With regard to women’s life on the farm the intern will develop a data sheet template to be used for women whose records are in the papers. This data sheet should include information such as birth, death, maiden name, educational level, marriage history, property ownership, daily chores, food and food ways mentioned, buying patterns (what and where), etc. With regard to hired labor, the intern will compile a listing of worker’s names appearing within the documents. Using the listings compiled the intern will create possible family groups and research with regard to finding specific instances of the names within the Maryland state records (federal census, birth, death, wills, inventories, and land transactions death – all available on-line through the Maryland State Archives website). Research will be complimented with focused search in journals on JSTOR, Ancestry.com and other on-line databases available through the museum’s subscription, and newspapers on microfilm at the Library of Congress and relevant records at the National Archives.
The intern should have solid research and writing skills and have completed some courses with components in 20th century women’s studies, labor, agriculture, social history and general United States history of the 20th century. Courses with a focus or segment in mid-Atlantic agriculture, labor, African-American history, women’s history would be especially helpful.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

There is a wealth of primary sources within the 165 year time span of the Robinson and Via Family Papers: ledgers, correspondence (personal and business), financial records, business and personal ephemera, product cookbooks, farm journals and diaries – all of these may yield fertile ground for an interesting and informative research product. Building on their knowledge skills and research interests the intern may develop a paper based on material discovered and available in this collection or from their assigned project. Research products that may be created from this internship and project are: teaching guides, gender studies papers, possible articles for publication or research papers centering on gender roles and women’s studies, labor, agriculture, food preparation and production, family, photography, home movies, and costume. The intern will also be given time to explore the full range of collections at the Archives Center and as time permits within the museum and other repositories with an eye to complimenting their end product.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program
Research Project Proposal, 2017

Name of Supervisor(s): Dr. Karen Lemmey, Curator of Sculpture

Department or Office: Curatorial
Museum/Unit: American Art Museum

Phone Number: 202-633-8354
Email Address: lemmeyk@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

I am responsible for the stewardship of a collection of more than 2000 sculptures, mostly dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and made of a wide array of media. My scholarly research investigates the biographies of sculptors and the history of fabrication, conservation, display, and reception of this sculpture collection. I am committed to disseminating this research through publication, exhibitions, public programs, docent training, and a range of other outreach initiatives. I am also responsible for identifying sculptures for potential acquisitions through purchase or gift, organizing exhibitions, and cultivating interest and support for the collection.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

One of my ongoing research projects is to examine the long history of how American sculpture explores the issue of race. While this project may someday lead to an exhibition, in its present phase it encompasses researching and offering new interpretations of a large number of works in the museum’s permanent collection.

In the 1850s, when fine art bronze casting first became available in this country, several sculptors purposefully depicted Native American and African American figures and seized on the suggestive possibilities for bronze to allude to a range of skin tones. Around this time, several American sculptors working in Italy explored racialized bodies in white marble. Relevant examples in the museum’s collection include Hiram Powers’ Greek Slave and William Wetmore Story’s Libyan Sibyl—a work that was once referred to as an abolitionist statement in stone. By the end of the nineteenth century, many sculptors took a pseudo-documentary approach to the subject of race. These self-fashioned ethnographers created works that blended observations they made on Indian reservations and pageantry they saw in Buffalo Bill Wild West-type shows and other commercial spectacles. Some sculptures depicted ceremonies that would have been off-limits to uninitiated audiences, such as Hermon Atkins MacNeil’s Moqui Rain Dancer and Paul Wayland Bartlett’s Ghost Dancer. Yet these works were exhibited at international venues, where they stood in as curious surrogates for the real rituals. Over time, sculptors have been employed by
academies and authorities to capture and index racial difference, as evidenced by Clark Mills’s life casts of Indians imprisoned at Fort Marion, or Malvina Hofman’s *Races of Mankind*. By the twentieth century artists from far more diverse backgrounds began to explore the subject of race. A number of African American artists, including Elizabeth Catlett and Sargent Johnson, found inspiration in African masks and ethnographic examples from ancient Mesoamerica. In more recent decades quite a few sculptors--most notably Fred Wilson, Fred Eversley, and David Hammons--have created highly abstract works that powerfully reference race without physically depicting the figure. While this list is by no means comprehensive, it sketches out some of the main works in which race and sculpture intersect.

The Smith College intern would assist with research on the sculptors and the artworks, mainly in the museum’s permanent collection, that addresses this broad topic. Responsibilities would include surveying and aggregating files in the curatorial, conservation, and registrar offices and conducting primary research, using the museum library, Archives of American Art, Library of Congress, and other local institutions and digitized collection. The intern would be involved in closely examining and recording of inscriptions on the objects, drafting interpretive texts, developing bibliographies, and assisting with education programs to disseminate information about the artists and their work.

No special knowledge of sculpture or American art is required, however the intern must have some basic coursework in art history and experience with basic methods of art historical research. Knowledge or an interest in American history would be helpful but would not be a prerequisite for the intern. Above all, the individual must be well-organized, self-sufficient, a strong writer, and professional in interactions with others--since collaboration with museum staff in education, conservation, registrar, and other offices will be required.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

An intern may produce a range of products, including brief biographical essays on the artists, interpretive texts for individual artworks, or an interpretive essay highlighting the connections between the artists. The intern’s texts may serve as the basis for gallery texts, blogs, and webpages linked to the museum’s online collection database. Other research products the intern may be asked to develop are an annotated bibliography and an illustrated roster of contemporary sculptors whose work addresses the theme of sculpture and race or whose work resonates deeply with historic examples in the museum’s collection.
Smith College / Smithsonian Institution Internship Program

Research Project Proposal

Name of Supervisor(s): Pamela M. Henson

Department or Office: Institutional History Division Museum/Unit: SI Archives

Phone Number: 202-633-5907                     Email Address: hensonp@si.edu

1. Please provide information on your research and/or the work of your office:

The Institutional History program of Smithsonian Institution Archives is the public history office responsible for research and public outreach on the history of the Smithsonian Institution itself. Staff conduct an oral history project on the history of the Institution, supervise the research of pre and postdoctoral researchers, prepare websites, maintain databases and curate exhibits on SI history, respond to queries on SI history from Smithsonian management, scholars and the general public, and present public programs. Research topics include the history of museums, history of science, women’s history, and institutional history.

2. Describe the project (include duties, nature and scope of the work), and indicate any particular academic background or specific courses needed as preparation:

The intern would work on several projects including 1) processing oral history collections of interviews with Smithsonian staff by preparing summaries and name/term lists for transcription and writing finding aids; or 2) conducting research on a specific topic to prepare web pages and online database entries [http://siarchives.si.edu/history]. Current projects have included preparations for the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in 2016, how the Civil War affected the Smithsonian, and the history of women at the Institution. The specific topic will be determined so it is compatible with the intern’s academic interests. The intern will gain experience in primary and secondary source research, by working with the archival, oral history and library collections of the Smithsonian, and hands-on experience in public history. The intern is also very likely to gain experience in digital history – presenting research results to the public via websites and other digital media.

3. Please describe possible research products an intern might develop, either from the project or the work of your office, to fulfill the academic requirement of the Smith College Program:

The intern can complete a research paper on a specific topic, such as the history of a museum, or significant event in Smithsonian history, such as World War I or the opening of the Hirshhorn Museum, or a biography of a Smithsonian figure, or outreach programs at the Institution. The student can also work on a “hands-on” project to gain practical experience, tied to the research
paper. This might include processing an oral history collection, writing blogs on their work, creating database entries that will be available on the website, drafting website pages on some aspect of the history of the Institution, assisting with a planned exhibition on the history of the Smithsonian or editing and preparing finding aids for oral history collections. The SI Archives Institutional History program website can be found at: http://siarchives.si.edu/history and the databases are in the History of the Smithsonian catalog, found here: www.siris.si.edu. Blogs by previous interns can be found at http://siarchives.si.edu/blog.